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## **Women's empowerment is a key to successful development**

**Recognizing positive steps of States towards implementation of MDGs, BPFA and CEDAW in the Central Asian region Forum of women's NGOs of Kyrgyzstan is expressing a deep concern with continuing challenges faced by poor and marginalised women in our region.**

Current dramatic underfunding of women's issues and women's groups continues putting at risk adequate improvement of women's wellbeing and gender equality certainly at national levels.

In the political terms gender equality was quite well addressed by various political and legislation steps: presidential decrees, state national plans, new laws and law reforming gains.

Women don't need only political declarations; women need adequate mechanisms, equal opportunities, adequate resources and real actions!

**In Kyrgyzstan a State institutional mechanism is destroyed during the last years!**

Without sufficient funding improvement of women's lives all national and international plans and commitments will be **planned failure**.

Women's issues at least in the form that are agreed in the **National gender equality action plans should to be integral part** of the country development strategy **with sufficient funding**, women's organizations' work should be supported also by State budget; women's voices need should be heard and directly represented at development strategies, finances and aid allocation discussions and decision-making tables, women's organizations need to be part of aid and development planning, monitoring processes. Access to resources should be guaranteed for development cooperation: country development must meet basic requirements in promotion of women human rights, gender equality, social justice, and development ownership.

**Gender mainstreaming failed as a strategy to address women's needs in Kyrgyzstan** - three gender equality national plans have not reached fully their goals, although it was including majority of state ministries' involvement and special actions for various state and non state bodies. Ministries, state institutions have no people and resources allocated for implementing those plans. State budget is not gender sensitive and doesn't include lines for women's lives' improvement. At financial macro level women's needs are not addressed in Kyrgyzstan. As a result women's needs are not addressed at the efficient scale.

**We call to implement commitment to reach women's empowerment!**

Gender equality, social justice and human rights should be results of development.

Women of Central Asia already had unequal access to **economic and financial resources** and decision-making – more than 85% of wealth in our countries is owned by men.

Women entrepreneurs have fewer opportunities to get access to financial resources because real wealth is concentrated in men's hands. In the result of structural economic neglecting of

women's economic empowerment for example in Kyrgyzstan we see from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Kyrgyzstan periodic report on MDGs we see that gender equality is not even mentioned.

If gender equality achievement, advancement of women, protection of women's human rights, social justice are only in State's and donors' plans but are not in their budgets, it is impossible to realize them! Commitments without concrete financial support and implementation mechanism remain only on paper.

In Kyrgyzstan **women's organizations** act as development actors and are driving forces for reaching gender equality. There are many examples of great and visible contribution by women's organization to MDG3: for example women's political empowerment long-term comprehensive program of the Forum of women's NGOs of Kyrgyzstan.

Women's organizations as development actors need support in their work as such actors.

**Women's organizations are functioning as development actors** in this sphere but they **are not funded as such from State budgets or ODA**. Women's organizations are funded by from funds and programs that have not signed AAA and big contribution is done by women's funds, like Global Fund for Women, Mamacash, HIVOS, UNIFEM.

**We call** for setting special international, regional and national funds for support of women's initiatives and organizations, for strengthening national and international institutional gender equality entities and machineries.

**Women's participation in political processes is crucial for reaching MDGs** - Women continue to be dramatically underrepresented in decision-making positions in all five Central Asian Republics.

Women should be present at the table when solutions are being discussed to support economic growth rooted in gender equality and social justice.

Women's NGOs are to be essential part of the **process of measuring and monitoring MDG implementation at all levels**.

**States should:**

1. Consider and support women and women's organizations as development actors .
2. Adopt and implement temporary special measures to increase the level of women's representation in all decision making positions,
3. Start Gender budgeting initiatives and Allocate in the state budget finances for women's rights.
4. Attract international financial support through inclusion of women's rights into country's priorities list.